

**B**URR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER is located one mile north of I-70 on Hwy 7, one mile west on Park Road. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays. **Area Hours: Starting April 6<sup>th</sup>, the area and trails are open 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. for Daylight Savings Time.** No pets allowed. There is no admission fee. Gift Shop closes at 4:30 p.m. Phone: 816-228-3766

LEARN MORE ABOUT BURR OAK WOODS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT:  
[WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG](http://WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG)



*The*  
**Nutshell**

BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER  
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
1401 NW PARK ROAD - BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64015



**FISH & WILDLIFE FEEDING**  
The fish, turtles and amphibians are fed Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Snakes are fed every Friday at 3:30 p.m.

**NATURE FILMS**  
Films are shown Saturdays & Sundays at 1:30 p.m.  
**April 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> Furbearers of Missouri**  
**April 19<sup>th</sup> Strange Creatures of the Night**  
**April 20<sup>th</sup> Amazing North America**

**Thank You!**

*We (and the feathered friends) wish to thank the following people for their generous donations of birdfeeders and seed:*

Billy Littrell, Sibley, MO – birdfeeders  
Joe Polka, Pleasant Hill, MO – birdfeeders & seed  
Kenneth and Markus Burns, Oak Grove, MO – tube feeders  
Gabriel Riggs, Lee’s Summit, MO – wooden birdfeeder  
Woodford and Joyce Roberts, Independence, MO – hopper feeder and assembly  
Ruby and Richard Abbott, Lee’s Summit, MO – 30 bluebird nest boxes  
Judy Oetting – Children’s story books  
Antoine Seed Co. – 17 birdfeeders and supplies



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# The Nutshell

Newsletter of Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center

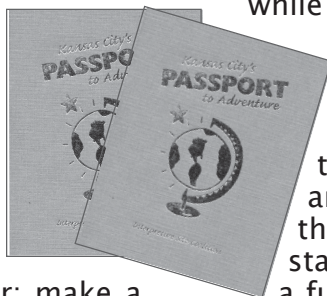
APRIL 2003  
Volume 17  
Number 4

## Kansas City’s Passport to Adventure!

Many people often travel great distances to visit museums, nature centers, historic sites, and botanical gardens. Yet, many of these exciting places are right in their own backyards! With today’s price of gasoline, there is no better time to discover what is in your own backyard and surrounding communities. This year, the Interpretive Site Coalition is celebrating its tenth annual *Passport to Adventure!* The kick-off event will be in Union Station on April 27 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm. Fourteen participating interpretive sites from around the Kansas City metro area will have stations set up with

activities for kids of all ages. Some things you can do include: catch a fish at the Burr Oak Woods’ station; meet a live bird of prey from Lakeside Nature Center; climb through a 6-foot spider web courtesy of Ernie Miller Nature Center; make a plant press at the Powell Gardens station; plant a seed with the National Agriculture Hall of Fame; get an autograph from Larry Rizzo, author of *Kansas City Wildlands*, as well as photographers, Kevin Sink, Pat Whalen, and Jim Rathert. There will be lots more to see and do, and surely something for everyone! Admission to Union Station is free.

Best of all, you can pick up your **free Kansas City Passport** while you are there, so you can begin your own discovery visiting the exciting places covered in the passport throughout the spring and summer. Visit each of the sites, collect the stamps, and win prizes. It’s a fun thing to do as a family, with friends, or by yourself, all the while discovering your community and all it has to offer! Make plans to stop at Union Station on April 27, join the fun and begin your *Passport to Adventure!*



### Coming in May! International Migratory Bird Day



Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 10th and join the staff and volunteers of Burr Oak Woods as we celebrate the world of birds! Our feathered friends will be in all of their spring glory as we celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a wide range of bird-focused activities for children, adults and families. Watch for the May Nutshell for more details.

### An Afternoon with Teddy . . . Roosevelt That Is!



**Sunday, April 27, 1:00–3:30 p.m.**

You’re invited to join us to welcome one of the greatest conservationists of the early 20th century, Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States. Actor/Historian Arch Ellwein captures the essence of Roosevelt in a riveting, living-theatre presentation. Among his many successes, Roosevelt is credited with beginning what would become today’s extensive system of National Wildlife Refuges, helping to define a new era in conservation. Learn about the former president’s environmental views and hear about his experiences in Montana as a rancher and sportsman. A Sign Language Interpreter will be present for the deaf and hard of hearing audience.



## Nature Center Invaded by Exotic Dancers!



BLUE SPRINGS, MO – “It was so scary, I tripped and fell!” exclaimed one frazzled attendee at a recent picnic at Burr Oak Woods. “When the dancing started, we couldn’t quite tell what was going on, but after they took flight, we realized this was something totally foreign to us. It all began with a bizarre sound that rose eerily from a clearing among the dried grasses and it just got stranger after that.”

When questioned further, several participants revealed that this group of male dancers called themselves the “Timberdoodles.” Furthermore, they apparently only dance at dusk, preferring to stay in the shadows, afraid of being detected by those that do not understand that theirs is a dance of passion.

Each spring they arrive, waiting for the right night when they begin with their strange “peenting,” repeating it over and over until suddenly leaping skyward. According to witnesses, these dancers rise high into the darkening sky in

broad circles, eventually plunging back to the earth in a death-defying free fall, all the while making twittering sounds. Somehow landing safely, they begin again, repeating their dance of love for as much as an hour.

When asked, Naturalist Ima Buzzard laughed, “Sure, what folks were witnessing was the mating dance and flight of the american woodcock. It is an annual spring event all designed for the male to attract a mate.” According to Buzzard, these strange-looking birds are quite harmless, unless you are a worm, which they can find underground. Their very long bill is flexible enough to partially open under the soil in order to grab their prey.

“The dance is nearing completion this year, but come next March, there will be a return engagement,” stated Ima. We’ll be sure to check it out!

## LOCAL HIKER CLAIMS SHE WITNESSED A MURDER... Companion Denies Allegations!

TREE TRAIL, MO – “We’ve always been taught to respect the natural world. When I came upon the scene, I was mortified,” Sally Serpa said in a statement released to the press last week. As far as she could tell, the animal was dead. It was lying on its back its tongue was sticking out of its mouth. It didn’t move and her friend appeared to be the culprit.

“Regardless of what she says, I found that thing lying just like that!” shouted an exasperated Ivana Hike. She explained that when she approached the snake, it first puffed up and tried to act “like a cobra” but when Ivana came closer, it suddenly turned onto its back and apparently died. “It was weird, but all I know is that I didn’t do anything to it,” she stated flatly.

Evidence gathered by herpetologists seems to clear Ms. Hike and find her story to be true. According to experts, this is a common behavior of a snake known as the hognose. “When threatened, hognose snakes put on quite a show, but it’s all a bluff. And when it doesn’t work, they just play dead,” said local herpetologist Guy Smiley. The two relieved friends are happy to know more about the reptilian world, and agreed to venture out into the woods more often for exploring!



## Deer Abbey,

**Deer Abbey:**  
I am writing because I’m at the edge of my nest! My man struts around here in his power suit like he’s the king. He sits in the tops of the trees, and sings like he’s on Broadway. If that weren’t enough, he keeps eyeing the other girls. I am about to fly the coop. What should I do? –Claudia Cardinal

**Deer Abbey,**  
I am so angry! Every night when I go to bed, these hooligans begin raising cane all around my home. Croaking and creaking. Trilling and burping till I just can’t take it anymore. If I weren’t a vegetarian, I’m telling you that they would wish they never started it! What can I do?  
– Sleepless in Beaver Lodge

**Deer Bucky,**  
Don’t you know it’s just your neighbors, the frogs and toads. While it can be a little loud, let the boys raise a ruckus. They’ll soon find mates and then stop their caterwauling.

**Deer Claudia,**  
You have to keep in mind that your hubby is just trying to defend you and your territory. His bellicose behavior helps keep you safe from predators and helps prevent others from sneaking into your nest to steal food and invade your space. As far as checking out the other ladies, it’s a genetic thing.

## From the Treetops



April Fools! We hope you enjoy this month’s special edition of the Nutshell. We thought you would find the truth about some of Missouri’s more unusual wildlife more interesting than some of the rumors and wife’s tales you may have already heard. Unlike the tabloids found at the grocery store checkout lines, it’s OK to admit to reading this one because it’s all true. So go ahead and satisfy your enquiring mind. After all—it’s educational!

*April* — LYNN YOUNGBLOOD  
Nature Center Manager

## Crime Wave Invades Forest! Representative Defends Potential Culprits.

FERN GREENBRIAR knows it’s happening, but she has no proof – at least not yet. “They’ve been doing it for years, and yet no one does anything about it!” Fern complains.

“It starts in the spring. First they go after the rebuds and serviceberries, later they just steal from anything that has a defenseless flower. It’s just not right, I tell you,” Fern rants. “Not even ones with thorns can do anything about it!” she exclaims.

Apparently, evidence of the crime has been hard to come by. Police raids have yielded nothing, and thus no charges have been filed. According to apiarist, Bea Waxman, there is nothing to be concerned about.

“Yes, there might be some shenanigans going on, but it’s a fair exchange. After all, if it weren’t for my girls, those flowers wouldn’t turn into any fruits,” claims Waxman. Indeed, this reporter thinks that Fern and others like her are simply overreacting.

The fact is that honeybees, Missouri’s state

## CAUGHT ON CAMERA!



## Northern Harrier on trial for murder!

## PHOTO EXCLUSIVE!

MARSHLAND, MO – In what scientists say may be one of mother nature’s greatest hoaxes, reports are emerging of animals capable of being frozen for months, only to return to life after “thawing” out! Reporters spent the winter investigating allegations of apparent “frog-cicles” discovered by young ice fishermen.

“It was weird. We had just finished cutting a hole in the ice when this “thing” popped out. It was frozen solid so naturally we thought it was dead,” stated 9 year-old Zeb Coe. Zeb went on to recount what happened when he got home with the amphibian.

“I set the frog down in the laundry room while I got cleaned up. I kinda forgot about him and when I went back to get him, he was missing! Unfortunately, my mom found him sitting in one of her best shoes. You should have seen her freak out!”

Reporters were skeptical at first, but it turns out that indeed there are frogs that can freeze, producing an anti-freeze-like chemical that helps keep them alive awaiting for the warmth of spring. “The natural world never ceases to amaze me,” exclaimed reporter Gene Bufo. We agree!

## MOTHERS BEWARE!



behind these poisonous beauties.

People have nothing to worry about, but that is not the case for the un-initiated young birds and other animals trying to make their way in the world. While many say a bite is not life-threatening, one bite of these foul-tasting morsels leaves a lasting impression.

Monarch butterflies are indeed beautiful, but beneath that orange and black pattern are found toxins ingested as caterpillars feeding on milkweeds. Sure, this is great protection from predators, but mothers watch what you’re feeding your babies!

THEY SEEM HARMLESS enough, six skinny legs, goofy looking eyes, and no teeth. In fact, many are attracted to them by their beautiful colors. Predators Beware! Those colors are just a ploy, hiding the real danger



## Death Defying Frogs Found in Wetland... Scientists Baffled!



# APRIL EVENTS *at Burr Oak Woods*

Call Burr Oak Woods CNC on or after April 1 to register for these free programs (Phone 228-3766 V/TDD). If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

## 5 *Saturday* Wildflowers of Spring



Join us for an afternoon stroll along our trails as we look for wildflowers. From bloodroot to Dutchman's breeches, you'll learn identification tips and their natural history.  
Time: 2:00-3:30 p.m.  
Ages: Adults (20 & up)

## 6 *Sunday* Burr Oak Woods Hiking Club

Join volunteer naturalists for a hike at River Bluff Park, along the 2.4 mile River Bluff Nature Trail. We'll meet at Burr Oak Woods. Please call to register.  
Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
Ages: Adults (20 & up)

## 8 *Tuesday* Birding 101

We'll be learning about cuckoos, hummingbirds, goatsuckers and swifts during this session. The evening will begin with a short bird walk, so bring binoculars and your field guide.  
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Ages: Adults (20 & up)

## 11 *Friday* Spring Bird Walk

With spring comes the arrival of our favorite feathered friends, and a few surprises, too. Get your day off on the right foot with a stroll along our trails. Bring binoculars and field guide, or borrow ours.  
Time: 8:00-9:30 a.m.  
Ages: All Ages Welcome

## 12 *Saturday* Birding 101 Field Trip

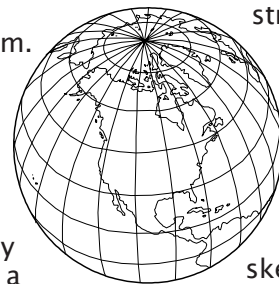
We're loading up the van and heading north to Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge for a day of spring birding at this premiere site. Please bring a sack lunch, drink, binoculars, field guide and dress for the weather.  
Time: 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Ages: Birding 101  
Participants only

## 13 *Sunday* Dr. Nutcase: Solar Shenanigans!

The Dr. is in the house again and this month, she's exploring the sun! No, not going to it, not staring at it, but exploring just how it helps make life on Earth possible. Join the good doctor for sun-filled fun! Please call to register.  
Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m.  
Ages: 7 & up

## 16 *Wednesday* Homeschool: Earth Day Celebration

We'll celebrate Earth Day by learning how we can make a difference! Bring an oatmeal container with lid and we'll recycle it into a cool, useable craft. Please call to register.  
Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m. or  
1:00-2:00 p.m.  
Ages: 3-6 years



## 19 *Saturday* Nature's Sketchbook

Being out in the field and sketching our natural world is the perfect way to study nature. Bring your sketchbook and creative spirit. Please call to register.  
Time: 2:00-3:30 p.m.  
Ages: Adult (20 & up)

## 16 *Wednesday* Homeschool: Plant-astic!

With the advent of spring, wildflowers are popping up leaves emerging from their buds We'll take a look at the wonderful world of plants, including heading outdoors in search of our green friends. Please call to register.  
Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m. or  
1:00-2:00 p.m.  
Ages: 7 & up



## 19 *Saturday* Babes in the Woods

Hey babies, tell your mom and dad that Burr Oak Woods has a new program just for you! Join us for a sensory nature hike designed just for babies ages 1-3. Don't forget the stroller! Please call to register.  
Time: 10:00-10:30 a.m.  
Ages: 1-3 years  
with parent(s)

### Burr Oak Woods Outdoor Public Areas CLOSED

**Youth Only Managed Turkey Hunt**  
Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>  
**All outdoor public areas will be closed from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on both days** as we host our first youth only managed turkey hunt. Ten young hunters will try their hand at turkey hunting, with the careful instruction of guides. Sponsors for this special hunt include the National Wild Turkey Federation, Safari Club International, Sables of Safari Club (a women's group), and taxidermist Monte Sink, as well as the Missouri Department of Conservation.



BE SURE TO CHECK THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE PROGRAMS!

# more! APRIL EVENTS *at Burr Oak Woods*



## 21 *Monday* Conservation Kid's Club: The Prince of the Pond Mystery

Can you hear that? There it is again! Is it a western chorus or a northern spring peeper? Join us as we uncover the mystery of those fantastic amphibians- frogs. We're sure to have a hopping great time. Be sure to dress for the weather. Please call to register.  
Time: 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Ages: 7-10

## 22 *Tuesday* Birding 101

We'll start the evening with a bird walk and finish with indoor session on woodpeckers, swallows and flycatchers. Be sure to bring your binoculars and field guide.  
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Ages: Adults (20 & up)

## 23 *Wednesday*

## 26 *Saturday (a.m. only)* Little Acorns

Join us as we celebrate Earth Day by learning how we can make a difference by recycling at home. Bring an oatmeal container with lid and we'll recycle it into a cool, useable craft. Please call to register.  
Time: 10:30-11:30 a.m. or  
1:00-2:00 p.m.  
Ages: 3-6 years

## 25 *Friday* Spring Bird Walk

Join us for an early morning stroll in and around the Bethany Falls Trail as we search for a variety of spring songbirds. Please meet at the trail parking lot at 7 a.m. Bring binoculars and field guide, or borrow ours.  
Time: 7:00-9:00 a.m.  
Ages: Adults (20 & up)

## 26 *Saturday* NEW SERIES! Discovering Missouri's Past

Join us as we explore our Missouri's rich cultural heritage. This month we will learn about the culture of Osage Indians. We will play a traditional game and craft followed by a wildflower hike. Please call to register.  
Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m.  
Ages: 7-10

## 26 *Saturday* Landscaping with Native Plants Workshop

Are you looking for ways to enhance the natural beauty and habitat diversity of your yard, while decreasing the amount of maintenance required? Here's your chance! Join staff from Longview Nursery for a workshop on Missouri native plants that can be grown in your yard. You'll also be able to discuss your situation in relation to what is possible. Please register for this special workshop as seating will be limited.

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
Ages: Adults  
(20 & up)



## 26 *Saturday* Birding 101 Field Trip

We'll be hiking the trails of Burr Oak Woods in search of songbirds during this morning of birding and fun. Dress for the weather and be sure to bring binoculars and your field guide.  
Time: 7:00 a.m.-Noon  
Ages: Birding 101  
Participants only

## 27 *Sunday* Passport to Adventure!

Please see description on front page.

## 27 *Sunday* An Afternoon with Teddy... Roosevelt, That Is!

Please see description on front page.

## SPRING INTO THE NATURE SHOP



We're inviting you to check out our new merchandise! We have a wide variety of singing Audubon birds, large and small, ranging from wood ducks to bluebirds and cardinals. We've also got the Bird Identifier, a new product that is a great (and fun) tool for learning bird songs, whether in the woods or your backyard. Our special book this month is the wonderful Wildflowers of Missouri, which is on sale for \$9.60.

We've also packaged one of a kind Mother's Day baskets for your favorite mom! Get them early and save money!



INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY! SUNDAY, MAY 10 AT 9 A.M. - 2 P.M.